



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

FEB 19 2003

Dear Mr. Markey:

Thank you for your letter of December 31, 2002, to the President regarding the ongoing situation with North Korea. I am responding on the President's behalf.

North Korea's nuclear weapons program is a threat to the international non-proliferation regime, regional security, and U.S. interests. The United States has been working closely with friends, allies, and key regional actors toward a peaceful, diplomatic solution.

This administration shares many of the views expressed in your letter. Regarding your suggestion to engage North Korea in a constructive dialogue, the President has said that the U.S. is prepared to consider a bold initiative in relations with North Korea, which includes a number of steps toward normalcy in our relationship. However, the North must first dismantle its nuclear weapons program in a verifiable and irreversible manner, and must cooperate fully with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and meet its obligations under the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT). We are working closely with the IAEA to report this matter to the United Nations Security Council.

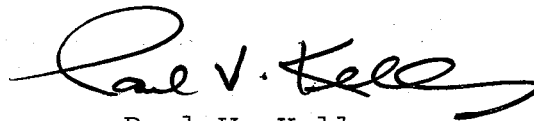
Regarding your proposals for assistance and assurances, President Bush has stated that the U.S. has no intention of invading North Korea. He has also stressed that the U.S. will not use food as a weapon, and that the U.S. will continue to provide emergency assistance to the people of North Korea. Other assistance is possible if we can resolve the nuclear problem.

The Honorable  
Edward Markey,  
House of Representatives.

The Administration has asked Congress to appropriate \$3.5 million for administrative expenses of the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) in FY 2003, with the understanding that none of this money would fund shipments of heavy fuel oil or light water reactor construction. Keeping KEDO in existence, should the U.S. and its partners decide to do so, in no way commits the U.S. to KEDO's current scope of work, including the light water reactors.

We hope that you find this letter useful. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we may be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul V. Kelly". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P" and a long, sweeping underline.

Paul V. Kelly  
Assistant Secretary  
Legislative Affairs